

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-08
AGRE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /064 W
-----024289 050817Z /11

R 050600Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4516
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
USICA WASHDC
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 SOFIA 0821

ATHENS ALSO FOR AGATT

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, PINT, EAGR, ECON, BU
SUBJECT: MAJOR PERSONNEL CHANGES IN WAKE OF PARTY CONFERENCE;
ZHIVKOV SPEECH AND LEADERSHIP

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REF: A) SOFIA 801 (NOTAL), B) SOFIA 793 (NOTAL),
C) 76 SOFIA 2081 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: MAJOR MINISTERIAL CHANGES, INCLUDING FIRING
OF TWO DEPUTY PREMIERS, WERE ANNOUNCED APRIL 29 IN WAKE
OF BCP NATIONAL PARTY CONFERENCE. VIRTUALLY ALL TOP
AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS WERE CHANGED, REFLECTING POOR

PERFORMANCE OF THAT SECTOR. AGRICULTURE MINISTER'S PROPOSED US JUNE VISIT IS PROBABLY OFF. MORE INFORMATION EMERGING ABOUT ZHIVKOV SPEECH AT CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. BULGARIAN PRESS APRIL 29 ANNOUNCED EIGHT MAJOR PERSONNEL CHANGES IN WAKE OF BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BCP) NATIONAL PARTY CONFERENCE APRIL 20-21 (REF A). CHANGES FOLLOW:

A. SAVA DULBOKOV, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (COM), AND MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND STATE RESERVES SINCE 1976, WAS FIRED.

B. YORDAN MLADENOV, MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING SINCE 1973, TOOK DULBOKOV'S PLACE AS MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND STATES RESERVES BUT WAS NOT DESIGNATED AS COM DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, A STRUCTURAL CHANGE.

C. MAKOV DAKOV WAS FIRED AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, COM, A POSITION HE HAD HELD SINCE 1971. HE WAS REPORTEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE AT THE COM.

D. GANCHO KRUSTEV WAS FIRED AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY, AS AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN TOLD WOULD OCCUR (REF B). KRUSTEV HAD BEEN IN TROUBLE FOR MORE THAN A YEAR FOR FAILURES OF BULGARIAN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. EMBASSY CONFIDENTIAL

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HAD OUTSTANDING AN INVITATION FOR KRUSTEV TO VISIT THE US TO SIGN AGRICULTURAL STATEMENT, AFTER IT HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED. WE SHALL RE-EXTEND INVITATION TO NEW MINISTER BUT INDICATE THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE SIGNING OF STATEMENT SHOULD BE DEPENDENT ON HIS ABILITY TO VISIT US, CONSIDERING HIS NEWNESS IN POSITION.

E. GRIGOR STOICHKOV, ALREADY DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COM AND CHAIRMAN OF MINISTERIAL-LEVEL COUNCIL FOR TERRITORIAL AND SETTLEMENT ORGANIZATION, WAS NAMED MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY, VICE KRUSTEV. AGRICULTURE THUS BECOMES ONLY MINISTRY HEADED BY A COM DEPUTY CHAIRMAN.

F. VULKAN SHOPOV, HEAD OF BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CC) AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT SINCE 1973 (AND A 1977 EXCHANGE VISITOR TO THE US) WAS FIRED.

G. ANGEL BOBOKOV, BCP RUSE DISTRICT CHAIRMAN, TOOK SHOPOV'S PLACE.

H. VASIL KHUBCHEV, RECENTLY NAMED AS FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF MACHINEBUILDING, BECAME MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING IN PLACE OF YORDAN MLADENOV (B ABOVE).

I. VASIL TSANOV, FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE ANDNK
FOOD INDU
STRY, WAS GIVEN RANK OF MINISTER.

J. EKATERINA MARINOVA, WHO WAS APPARENTLY IN THE PAST A
KOMSOMOL SECRETARY WITH AN ENGINEERING BACKGROUND, WAS ALSO
NAMED FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY
WITH THE RANK OF MINISTER.

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3. BULGARIAN AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES REPORT THAT FIRINGS
OCCURRED AT DIRECT ORDZRS OF TODOR ZHIVKOV. REPORTS
INDICATE THAT EARLY INTO HIS APRIL 21 SPEECH TO CONFER-
ENCE, ZHIVKOV TOSSED ASIDE HIS PREPARED TEXT AND EXTEM-
PORANEOUSLY RIPPED INTO THOSE WHOM HE TERMED RESPONSIBLE

FOR THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURE, NAMING NAMES, SOME OF WHOM WERE AMONG THOSE SINCE FIRED. ZHIVKOV ACCUSED THEM OF LYING TO HIM, FALSIFYING VITAL DATA WHICH THEN DISTORTED PLANNING PRO-
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CEDURES AND LEFT HIM IN A SITUATION WHERE EVEN HE DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE BULGARIAN ECONOMY. HE THEN OUTLINED STEPS THAT HE WAS INSTITUTING TO TRY TO RECTIFY SITUATION (REF A).

4. MAJOR TARGET OF PURGE WAS AGRICULTURE. SHOPOV, KRUSTEV, DAKOV, AND DULBOKOV -- WHO TO A DEGREE WAS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE -- ARE OUT. AGRICULTURE IS NOW THE ONLY MINISTRY HEADED BY COM DEPUTY CHAIRMAN AND NEW PEOPLE ARE IN PLACE IN CHARGE OF AGRICULTURE IN GOVERNMENT AND PARTY. THREE OF THEM HAVE THE RANK OF MINISTER. IT COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE. BOBOKOV IS AN AGRONOMIST, MANAGED A COLLECTIVE FARM, AND HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE AGRI-CULTURALLY RICH RUSE DISTRICT SINCE 1973. TSANOV IS ALSO A VETERAN, AND AGRONOMIST WITH FARM MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, NEITHER MINISTER STOICHKOV NOR FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER MARINOVA HAS ANY BACKGROUND IN AGRICULTURE, ALTHOUGH STOICHKOV SEEMS TO BE A REASONABLY ACTIVE ADMINIS-TRATOR.

5. REPLACEMENT OF DULBOKOV BY YORDAN MLADENOV REFLECTS FAILURE OF FORMER TO BRING ORDER TO SAD STATE OF COORDINA-TION WITHIN BULGARIAN ECONOMY WHICH DULBOKOV HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO DO IN SEPTEMBER 1976 (REF C). MLADENOV HAS BUILT A SOLID REPUTATION THROUGH HIS HIGH-PERFORMING ELECTRONICS MINISTRY AND MAY DO BETTER THAN DULBOKOV.

6. SOME VACANCIES REMAIN, INCLUDING TWO AT LEVEL OF COM DEPUTY CHAIRMAN UNLESS NUMBER OF THOSE (SEVEN) IS TO BE REDUCED, AND PARTY FIRST SECRETARY FOR RUSE. PRE-CONFERENCE RUMOR HAD IT THAT DAUGHTER LYUDMILA ZHIVKOVA WOULD BE NAMED TO POSITION OF PARTY FIRST SECRETARY FOR VARNA, PRESENT INCUMBENT OF WHICH ALSO HOLDS PARTY RANK
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OF POLITBURO CANDIDATE MEMBER, WHICH SHE WOULD THEN BE MADE AFTER A DECENT INTERVAL, THUS ESTABLISHING HER PARTY CREDENTIALS, OR AS A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COM. THERE HAS BEEN GRUMBLING IN THE PARTY ABOUT THE VARNA POSSIBILTIIY ANB IT HAS NOT YET TAKEN PLACE. IT WILL THUS BE INTERESTING

TO WATCH THE APPOINTMENTS TO THESE VACANT SLOTS. RUSE IS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE FOURTH LARGEST CITY IN THE COUNTRY AND IT COULD BE DEEMED THAT ITS FIRST SECRETARY SHOULD ALSO BE A POLITBURO CANDIDATE MEMBER.

7. COMMENT: BULGARIA HAS ONCE AGAIN ATTEMPTED TO DEAL WITH ITS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BY CHANGING TOP PERSONNEL AND MODIFYING THE GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE. ZHIVKOV HAS BEEN SEEN TURNING THE RASCALS OUT AND TUNING THE SYSTEM. CONSIDERING PAST RESULTS OF SUCH EFFORTS, EMBASSY IS SKEPTICAL THAT THESE CHANGES WILL HAVE MUCH IMPACT SINCE THEY DO NOT DEAL WITH BASIC PROBLEMS OF RESPONSIBILITY, INCENTIVE, LABOR PRODUCTIVITY AND SO FORTH THAT ARE INDEMIC TO SYSTEM. IN ADDITION, THE SORT OF RAPID TURNOVER THAT THIS PURGE TYPIFIES IS CERTAINLY NO INCENTIVE TO IMAGINATIVE, LONG-RANGE LEADERSHIP BY THOSE NEWLY PUT ON THE HOT SEAT.

8. QUESTION OF HOW ZHIVKOV AVOIDS DEALING WITH QUESTION OF WHO OTHER THAN HE IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR STATE OF NATION IS MORE DIFFICULT. ULTIMATE ANSWER IS THAT HE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE TO PEOPLE OF BULGARIA FOR HIS POSITION. HE IS ANSWERABLE BASICALLY TO A SMALL NUMBER OF HIS OWN CLIENTS AND THE ULTIMATE PATRON, THE SOVIET UNION, WHO DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE LOST FAITH IN HIM NOR TAKEN ANY STEPS WE HAVE HEARD OF TO CONSIDER REPLACING HIM.

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9. INTERESTING FOOTNOTE IS EXTENT OF SECURITY PRECAUTIONS THAT SURROUND ZHIVKOV IN THIS NATION WITH LONG HERITAGE OF POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS AND MILITARY COUP D'ETATS. MILITARY GUARDS AT OFFICIAL RESIDENCES AT VRANYA, LOZENETS, AND BOYANA AND GEORGI DIMITROV MAUSOLEUM ARE REPORTEDLY ROTATED EVERY TWO HOURS AND SAME GUARD DOES NOT RETURN TO SAME SITE AT SAME TIME IN ANY PATTERN, TO PREVENT ANY OF THEM FROM BEING ABLE TO ESTABLISH A PATTERN IN HIS SCHEDULE. ONE BULGARIAN DREW CONTRAST BETWEEN ZHIVKOV'S APPROACH TO BULGARIA'S CONFIDENTIAL

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ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THAT OF HIS PREDECESSOR, VULKO

CHERVENKOV. CHERVENKOV APPARENTLY DROVE AROUND SOFIA FROM TIME TO TIME, STOPPED AT RANDOM AT SHOPS, BUYING BREAD OR SOME OTHER PRODUCT, TRYING IT ON THE SPOT, AND TAKING STEPS THE NEXT DAY IF THE QUALITY WAS POOR, COSMETIC BUT IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE. ZHIVKOV AND HIS CIRCLE, BY CONTRAST, ARE CONSIDERED TO BE SEPARATED FROM EVERYDAY BULGARIAN LIFE BY A WALL OF PRIVILEGES -- SPECIAL SHOPS, CURTAINED CARS, GUARDED RESIDENCES, ETC. -- WHICH PROTECT HIM AND ISOLATE HIM AND RENDER HIM INSENSITIVE TO THE LOT OF THE BULGARIAN PEOPLE, THOSE WHO ARE NOT ON THE GRAVY TRAIN. DESPITE HIS HUMBLE ORIGINS AND RELATIVELY FREQUENT PUBLIC APPEARANCES. END COMMENT.

10. ACTION: DEPT IS REQUESTED TO CALL INFORMATION REGARDING CHANGES AT MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS FOR POSSIBLE VISIT TO US BY MINISTER TO ATTENTION OF DEPT OF AGRICULTURE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 05 may 1978
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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SAS ID: 2776655
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PERSONNEL CHANGES IN WAKE OF PARTY CONFERENCE; ZHIVKOV SPEECH AND LEADERSHIP CONFIDENTIAL
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, PINT, EAGR, ECON, BU, BCP
To: STATE
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